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***"Celebrating the Spirit of Democracy"***

*Boyd observes the 40th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act*

By Congressman Allen Boyd (D-FL)

On August 6, the United States will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the historic Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The right to choose one's representatives in the voting booth is the basis of a free, democratic society. Voting is the foundation of our democracy.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 sought to reverse this disenfranchisement. A champion of civil rights causes, Congressman Boyd has been a strong supporter of the Act.

The horrific attack on protesters in Selma, Alabama on March 7, 1965, commonly known as "Bloody Sunday," led to the passage of the Act.

Since 1965, the Voting Rights Act has been extended three times in 1970, 1975, and 1982. Changes have been made to the Act to ensure its effectiveness.

In 2007, several key protections contained in the Voting Rights Act will expire, including the requirement that jurisdictions with a history of discrimination must obtain federal approval for any changes to their voting laws.

The passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965 was a crucial step in our development as a free country, and it remains a cornerstone of our democracy.

